IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant	: Barry Appelman et al.	Art Unit	: 2154
Serial No.	: 10/718,039	Examiner	: Michael E. Keefer
Filed	: November 21, 2003	Conf. No.	: 7170
Title	: CHAT PERSONALIZATION		

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BRIEF ON APPEAL

(1)   Real Party in Interest

AOL Inc., is the real party in interest.

(2)   Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related appeals or interferences.

(3)   Status of Claims

Claims 1, 4, 7-77, 90, and 91 are pending in this application, with claims 1, 24, 45, 56, and 77 being independent. Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 78-89 and 92 have been previously cancelled. Claims 1, 4, 7-77, 90, and 91 have been rejected. The rejection of claims 1, 4, 7-77, 90, and 91 is being appealed.

(4)   Status of Amendments

All amendments have been entered. No amendments to the claims have been filed after the final Office Action of August 19, 2009.

(5)   Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

Independent claim 1 is directed to a computer readable storage device storing a program for providing a user interface on a display that enables perception of communications that leverage a chat platform. *See, e.g.*, Application, Page 14, Lines 3 to 4; Page 24, Lines 20 to 22.

The program includes a module for rendering a chat application user interface for a chat communications session involving at least a first chat participant and a second chat participant,

the first chat participant and the second chat participant using a first chat system and a second chat system, respectively, and the chat application user interface being presented at a system display presented to the second chat participant by the second chat system. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 14, Lines 3 to 11.

The program also includes a module for accessing at least one stored personalization item, the stored personalization item being selected by the first or the second chat participant in a non-chat, instant messaging context. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 30, Lines 15 to 17.

The program also includes a module for mapping the accessed personalization item selected in the non-chat, instant messaging context, which involves one-to-one communications, to a chat context, which involves one-to-many communications, the mapping being based on definitions of personalization items in the chat context and definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 50, Lines 1 to 6.

The program also includes wherein at least one of the definitions of personalization items in the chat context differing from at least one of the corresponding definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 49, Lines 28 to 29.

The program also includes a module for rendering the mapped personalization item on the chat application user interface. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 11, Line 1 to 9.

Independent claim 24 is directed to a computer implemented method for enabling perception of a personalization item in a chat communications session. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 14, Lines 3 to 4; Page 24, Lines 20 to 22.

The method includes storing on a host system one or more personalization items associated with a chat application operator, the personalization items representing user preferences and being selected by the chat application operator in a non-chat, instant messaging context. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 30, Lines 15 to 17.

The method also includes storing, in a memory accessible to a chat host system, a mapping of definitions of the personalization items in a chat context, which involves one-to-many communications, to definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant

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messaging context, which involves one-to-one communications. *See, e.g.*, Application, Page 50, Lines 1 to 6.

The method also includes wherein at least one of the definitions of personalization items in the chat context differing from at least one of the corresponding definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context. *See, e.g.*, Application, Page 49, Lines 28 to 29.

The method also includes receiving a request from a chat participant system for personalization items associated with the chat application operator. *See, e.g.*, Application, Page 61, Lines 30 to 31; Fig. 21, step 2130.

The method also includes accessing the stored personalization items and the stored mapping at the host system. *See, e.g.*, Application, Page 62, Lines 1 to 2; Page 50, Lines 1 to 6; Fig. 21, step 2135.

The method also includes identifying, based on the accessing, personalization items associated with the chat application operator. *See, e.g.*, Application, Page 62, Lines 2 to 3; Page 50, Lines 1 to 6; Fig. 21, step 2140.

The method also includes communicating the identified personalization items from the host system to the chat participant system for rendering in a chat application running on the chat participant system, the identified personalization item being mapped, based on the stored mapping, from the non-chat, instant messaging context to the chat context for rendering in the chat application. *See, e.g.*, Application, Page 62, Lines 12 to 13; Page 50, Lines 1 to 6; Fig. 21, step 2145.

Independent claim 45 is directed to a computer readable storage device storing a computer program. *See, e.g.*, Application, Page 24, Lines 20 to 22.

The program includes instructions for storing on a host system one or more personalization items associated with a chat application operator, the personalization items representing user preferences and being selected by the chat application operator in a non-chat, instant messaging context. *See, e.g.*, Application, Page 30, Lines 15 to 17.

The program also includes instructions for storing, in a memory accessible to a chat host system, a mapping of definitions of the personalization items in a chat context, which involves

one-to-many communications, to definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context, which involves one-to-one communications. *See, e.g.,* Page 50, Lines 1 to 6.

The program also includes instructions wherein at least one of the definitions of personalization items in the chat context differing from at least one of the corresponding definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 49, Lines 28 to 29.

The program also includes instructions for receiving a request from a chat participant system for personalization items associated with the chat application operator. See, e.g., Application, Page 61, Lines 30 to 31; Fig. 21, step 2130.

The program also includes instructions for accessing the stored personalization items and the stored mapping at the host system. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 62, Lines 1 to 2; Page 50, Lines 1 to 6; Fig. 21, step 2135.

The program also includes instructions for identifying, based on the accessing, personalization items associated with the chat application operator. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 62, Lines 2 to 3; Page 50, Lines 1 to 6; Fig. 21, step 2140.

The program also includes instructions for communicating the identified personalization items from the host system to the chat participant system for rendering in a chat application running on the chat participant system, the identified personalization item being mapped, based on the stored mapping, from the non-chat, instant messaging context to the chat context for rendering in the chat application. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 62, Lines 12 to 13; Page 50, Lines 1 to 6; Fig. 21, step 2145.

Independent claim 56 is directed to a computer readable storage device storing a computer program. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 24, Lines 20 to 22.

The program includes instructions for rendering, on a first chat participant system, a chat application user interface for a chat communications session, which involves one-to-many communications, involving at least an intended second chat participant and a first chat participant. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 58, Lines 25 to 27; Fig. 19, step 1915; Fig. 20, UI 2000.

The program also includes instructions for rendering at the first chat participant system, a personalization item associated with the second chat participant prior to communication with the

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intended second chat participant system, the personalization item being selected by the second chat participant in a non-chat, instant messaging session, which involves one-to-one communications, and the rendering of the personalization item being based on a stored mapping of personalization item definitions from a non-chat, instant messaging context to a chat context. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 58, Lines 28-30; Page 50, Lines 1 to 6; Fig. 19, step 1920.

The program also includes instructions wherein at least one of the definitions of personalization items in the chat context differing from at least one of the corresponding definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 49, Lines 28 to 29.

Independent claim 77 is directed to a computer implemented method for enabling perception of a personalization item in a chat communications session. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 14, Lines 3 to 4; Page 24, Lines 20 to 22.

The method includes storing a personalization item selected by a user in a non-chat, instant messaging context. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 30, Lines 15 to 17.

The method also includes mapping the stored personalization item from a non-chat, instant messaging context, which involves one-to-one communications, to a chat context, which involves one-to-many communications, the stored personalization item having a meaning in the non-chat, instant messaging context that is different from a meaning in the chat context. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 50, Lines 1 to 6; Page 49, Lines 28 to 29.

The method also includes receiving, during a chat communications session involving the user, a request from a chat message recipient system for personalization items associated with the user. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 61, Lines 30 to 31; Fig. 21, step 2130.

The method also includes sending the mapped personalization item to the chat message recipient system such that the mapped personalization item is rendered at the chat message recipient system when rendering a portion of a chat message. *See, e.g.,* Application, Page 62, Lines 12 to 21; Page 50, Lines 1 to 6; Fig. 21, steps 2145 & 2155.

(6)   Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

The 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of claims 1, 24, 42-45, and 77 as being obvious over

U.S. Patent No. 7,133,900 ("Szeto") in view of Trillian v0.73.

The 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of claims 1, 4, 7-12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20-32, 34, 35, 37-

41, 45-48, 50, 51, 53-64, 66, 67, 69, 71-77, and 90-92 as being obvious over U.S. Patent No.

5,880,731 ("Liles") in view of Trillian v0.73.

The 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of claims 13, 16, 33, 36, 49, 52, 68, and 70 as being

obvious over Liles in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0059425

("Belfiore") and U.S. Patent No. 5,963,217 ("Grayson").

The 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of claims 13, 16, 33, 36, 49, and 52 as being obvious

over Szeto in view of Belfiore and Grayson.

The 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of claims 19 and 82 as being obvious over Liles in

view of Belfiore and U.S. Patent No. 5,745,556 ("Ronen").

The 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 65 as being obvious over Liles in view of

Belfiore and U.S. Patent No. 5,944,780 ("Chase").

All of the pending rejections are being appealed.

(7)   Argument

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Appellants requests reversal of the rejections of claims 1, 4, 7-77, 90, and 91 because

none of Szeto, Trillian v0.73, Liles, Belfiore, Grayson, Ronen, Chase, or any proper combination

of the four describes or suggests all of the features of independent claims 1, 24, 45, 56, and 77, as

described more fully below.

Section 103 rejection based on Szeto and Trillian v0.73

Independent claim 1 recites, among other things, the following feature:

> a module for mapping the accessed personalization item selected in
> the non-chat, instant messaging context, <u>which involves one-to-one
> communications,</u> to a chat context, <u>which involves one-to-many
> communications,</u> the mapping being based on definitions of
> personalization items in the chat context and definitions of the

> personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context,
> wherein at least one of the definitions of personalization items in
> the chat context differing from at least one of the corresponding
> definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant
> messaging context.

Szeto and Trillian v0.73, whether taken alone or in proper combination, fail to disclose or suggest mapping the accessed personalization item selected in the non-chat, instant messaging context to a chat context as recited in claim 1.

Szeto discloses a method for sharing an instant messaging environment where an environment selected by a participant is passed to the other participants in the instant messaging system through the use of environment identifiers. *See* Szeto, Abstract and col. 7, lines 17-37. As the final Office Action acknowledges, Szeto does not disclose or suggest at least the "module for mapping" noted above. *See* final Office Action dated August 19, 2009, p. 3.

Recognizing deficiencies in Szeto, the final Office Action turns to Trillian v0.73. On page 3, the final Office Action asserts that "[t]he general concept of migrating items from one context to another via mapping is well known in the art as taught by Trillian." Final Office Action dated August 19, 2009, p. 3. However, the screenshot of Trillian v0.73 provided with the Office Action only shows that one "Buddy Icon" may be used "for all connections." However, it is unclear what constitutes "all connections." At best, the Trillian v0.73 screenshot teaches that a "buddy icon" can be shared across multiple applications (e.g. AIM and ICQ) within the same non-chat, instant message class, not from one type of application to another type of application.

Conversely, the "module for mapping" feature of claim 1 maps personalization items from one type of application—a non-chat, one-to-one, instant messaging context—to another type of application—a one-to-many, chat context. Referring to the Trillian screenshot, the final Office Action asserts "trillion [sic] does enable users to use both an IM and chat environment, as a user can have multiple IM windows open talking to many different users, thus meeting the claimed definition of chat as being 'one to many'." Final Office Action dated August 19, 2009, p. 29 However, each of the multiple "IM windows" referred to by the final Office Action is a form of one-to-one communication. Multiple instances of a one-to-one communication do not constitute one-to-many communication.

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These two classes of application are generally different in other respects, as well. For example, non-chat, instant messaging facilitates interruption of a user for communications initiated by another participant, whereas chat requires the user to navigate to one of many virtual areas to communicate with a plurality of other participants. Since these two types of applications are different, Trillian v0.73 cannot disclose or anticipate the "module for mapping" in independent claim 1 and thus fails to cure the deficiencies of Szeto.

The Office Action also asserts that "that it is possible to map different icons for different 'connections' using the dropdown box under the 'use one icon for all connections' checkbox." Initially, Appellants notes that, without further documentation, it is unclear exactly what the "dropdown box under the 'use one icon for all connections' checkbox" actually accomplishes. At best, the "dropdown box" enables the user to select a specific buddy icon to be associated with a specific instant messaging connection. However, there is no "mapping" of the buddy icon. Rather, the user simply indicates the specific buddy icon to be utilized for a specific instant messaging connection. Conversely, claim 1 recites mapping the accessed personalization item selected in the non-chat, instant messaging context (e.g., the specific buddy icon) to a chat context.

The Advisory Action asserts that "Trillian teaches of selecting an icon and sending the icon to AIM contacts in the chat window. The icon is selected in a non-chat, instant messaging context and is applied to chat, instant messaging contacts and in the chat window, which is in a chat context." Advisory Action dated December 17, 2009, p. 2. However, it is entirely unclear how the screenshot of Trillian v0.73 teaches these things. As described above, the screenshot of Trillian v0.73 provided with the Office Action only shows that one "Buddy Icon" may be used "for all connections." Even if, *arguendo*, using a buddy icon "for all connections" implies the use of the buddy icon in both AOL Instant Message and AOL chat (a point the Appellant does not concede), it cannot be inferred from the screenshot of Trillian v0.73 that the definition of the personalization item in the chat context differs from the corresponding definition of the personalization item in the non-chat, instant messaging context, as recited in claim 1.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Szeto and Trillian v0.73—taken alone or in any proper combination—fail to disclose or suggest each and every element recited in independent claim 1.

Therefore, Appellants request reversal of the section 103 rejection of claim 1 and its dependent claims.

Amended independent claims 24 and 45 recite, among other things, a computer implemented method and computer readable storage device, respectively, including:

> storing, in a memory accessible to a chat host system, a mapping of definitions of the personalization items in a chat context, which involves one-to-many communications, to definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context, which involves one-to-one communications, wherein at least one of the definitions of personalization items in the chat context differing from at least one of the corresponding definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context.

Appellants submit that this feature of claims 24 and 45 is not disclosed or suggested by Szeto and Trillian v0.73 for at least similar reasons, as discussed above. Therefore, Appellants request reversal of the section 103 rejection of claims 24 and 45 and their dependent claims based on Szeto and Trillian v0.73 for at least reasons similar to those presented above in connection with claim 1.

Similarly, amended independent claim 77 recites, among other things, a computer implemented method including:

> mapping the stored personalization item from a non-chat, instant messaging context, which involves one-to-one communications, to a chat context, which involves one-to-many communications, the stored personalization item having a meaning in the non-chat, instant messaging context that is different from a meaning in the chat context.

Appellants submit that this feature of claim 77 is not disclosed or suggested by Szeto and Trillian v0.73 for at least similar reasons, as discussed above. Therefore, Appellants request reversal of the section 103 rejection of claim 77 and its dependent claims based on Szeto and Trillian v0.73 for at least reasons similar to those presented above in connection with claim 1.

Section 103 rejection based on Liles and Trillian v0.73

Liles and Trillian v0.73 do not support a conclusion of obviousness with respect to claims 1, 4, 7-12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20-32, 34, 35, 37-41, 45-48, 50, 51, 53-64, 66, 67, 69, 71-77, and 90-92. Liles discloses a system for representing participants in a chat session with avatars that may

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be animated. *See* Liles, Abstract. As the Office Action acknowledges, Liles does not disclose or suggest at least the "module for mapping" noted above. *See* Office Action, p. 8. Rather, the Office Action turns to Trillian v0.73 to cure this deficiency. As discussed above, however, Trillian v0.73 fails to describe or suggested the above-discussed features of independent claims 1, 24, 45, 56, and 77. Therefore, Appellants request reversal of the section 103 rejection of claims 1, 24, 45, 56, and 77 and their dependent claims.

  <u>Section 103 rejection based on Liles, Belfiore, and Grayson</u>
  The rejection of claims 13, 16, 33, 36, 49, 52, 68, and 70 based on Liles, Belfiore, and Grayson is improper, because claims 13, 16, 33, 36, 49, 52, 68, and 70 are dependent upon claims 1, 25, and 45, whose rejection is based on Liles and <u>Trillian v0.73</u>, not Belfiore. Appellants, therefore, respectfully request reversal of the section 103 rejection.

  <u>Section 103 rejection based on Szeto, Belfiore, and Grayson</u>
  The rejection of claims 13, 16, 33, 36, 49, and 52 based on Szeto, Belfiore, and Grayson is improper, because claims 13, 16, 33, 36, 49, and 52 are dependent upon claims 1, 25, and 45, whose rejection is based on Liles and <u>Trillian v0.73</u>, not Belfiore. Appellants, therefore, respectfully request reversal of the section 103 rejection.

  <u>Section 103 rejection based on Liles, Belfiore, and Ronen</u>
  The rejection of claims 19 and 82 based on Liles, Belfiore, and Ronen is improper, because claim 82 was previously cancelled and claim 19 is dependent upon claim 1, whose rejection is based on Liles and <u>Trillian v0.73</u>, not Belfiore. Appellants, therefore, respectfully request reversal of the section 103 rejection.

  <u>Section 103 rejection based on Liles, Belfiore, and Chase</u>
  The rejection of claim 65 based on Liles, Belfiore, and Chase is improper, because claim 65 is dependent upon claim 56, whose rejection is based on Liles and <u>Trillian v0.73</u>, not Belfiore. Appellants, therefore, respectfully request either (i) withdrawal of the section 103 rejection or (ii) a completed rejection curing the deficiencies of the asserted section 103 rejection.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Appendix of Claims

1. (Previously Presented) A computer readable storage device storing a program for providing a user interface on a display that enables perception of communications that leverage a chat platform, the program comprising:

a module for rendering a chat application user interface for a chat communications session involving at least a first chat participant and a second chat participant, the first chat participant and the second chat participant using a first chat system and a second chat system, respectively, and the chat application user interface being presented at a system display presented to the second chat participant by the second chat system;

a module for accessing at least one stored personalization item, the stored personalization item being selected by the first or the second chat participant in a non-chat, instant messaging context;

a module for mapping the accessed personalization item selected in the non-chat, instant messaging context, which involves one-to-one communications, to a chat context, which involves one-to-many communications, the mapping being based on definitions of personalization items in the chat context and definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context, wherein at least one of the definitions of personalization items in the chat context differing from at least one of the corresponding definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context; and

a module for rendering the mapped personalization item on the chat application user interface.

2.   (Canceled)

3.   (Canceled)

4.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which the personalization item is rendered upon the occurrence of a change in a presence state of the individual chat user.

5.   (Canceled)

6.   (Canceled)

7.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which an identifier of the at least one personalization item is obtained by the second chat system from the first chat system in a chat message.

8.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which an identifier of the at least one personalization item is obtained from a chat host system, the chat host system storing one or more identifiers associated with one or more personalization items for one or more chat users, the chat host system receiving an identity of an individual chat user and accessing an identifier associated with the individual chat user.

9.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which an identifier of the at least one personalization item is obtained by retrieving the identifier from the second chat system.

10.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which an identifier of the at least one personalization item is obtained by retrieving the identifier from a remote data store.

11.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which the personalization item comprises a graphic.

12.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 11 in which the graphic comprises an icon.

13.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which the personalization item comprises a sound.

14.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which the personalization item comprises wallpaper capable of being rendered on a chat application user interface.

15.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which the personalization item comprises an animation sequence.

16.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which the personalization item comprises a video segment.

17.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which the personalization item comprises a customized item provided by the first chat participant.

18.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which personalization item comprises a personalization item provided by a third party.

19.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 18 in which the personalization item is enabled to be rendered in consideration of a payment.

20.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1 in which the personalization item is configured to expire upon the occurrence of a predetermined event.

21.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 20 in which the predetermined event comprises passage of a predetermined length of time.

22.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 20 in which the predetermined event comprises passage of a predetermined date.

23.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 20 in which the predetermined event comprises a predetermined number of uses.

24.   (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method for enabling perception of a personalization item in a chat communications session, the method comprising:

storing on a host system one or more personalization items associated with a chat application operator, the personalization items representing user preferences and being selected by the chat application operator in a non-chat, instant messaging context;

storing, in a memory accessible to a chat host system, a mapping of definitions of the personalization items in a chat context, which involves one-to-many communications, to definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context, which involves one-to-one communications, wherein at least one of the definitions of personalization items in the chat context differing from at least one of the corresponding personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context;

receiving a request from a chat participant system for personalization items associated with the chat application operator;

accessing the stored personalization items and the stored mapping at the host system;

identifying, based on the accessing, personalization items associated with the chat application operator; and

communicating the identified personalization items from the host system to the chat participant system for rendering in a chat application running on the chat participant system, the identified personalization item being mapped, based on the stored mapping, from the non-chat, instant messaging context to the chat context for rendering in the chat application.

25.   (Original) The method of claim 24 in which receiving the request comprises:

receiving an identifier enabling identification of a personalization item associated with the chat application operator.

26.   (Original) The method of claim 24 in which receiving the request comprises receiving an identity of the chat participant; and

accessing the personalization items comprises accessing the personalization items associated with the received identity.

27.   (Original) The method of claim 25 in which receiving the identifier further comprises receiving an identifier comprising a location on the host system of the personalization item.

28.   (Original) The method of claim 27 in which the identifier further comprises an item type and a data size.

29.   (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein the identifier further comprises one or more of a custom item flag, an official item flag, a banned item flag, and a redirect to different item flag.

30.   (Original) The method of claim 24 in which the host comprises a server authorized as a partner to a chat host.

31.   (Original) The method of claim 24 in which storing the personalization items comprises storing a graphic.

32.   (Original) The method of claim 31 in which the graphic comprises an icon.

33.   (Original) The method of claim 24 in which storing the personalization items comprises storing a sound.

34.   (Original) The method of claim 24 in which storing the personalization items comprises storing wallpaper capable of being rendered on a chat application user interface.

35.   (Original) The method of claim 24 in which storing the personalization items comprises storing an animation sequence.

36.   (Original) The method of claim 24 in which storing the personalization items comprises storing a video segment.

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37. (Original) The method of claim 24 in which in which storing the personalization items comprises storing a personalization item configured to expire upon the occurrence of a predetermined event.

38. (Original) The method of claim 37 in which the predetermined event comprises passage of a predetermined length of time or the passage of a predetermined date.

39. (Original) The method of claim 37 in which the predetermined event comprises a predetermined number of uses.

40. (Original) The method of claim 37 further comprising:
determining whether the personalization item has expired, and
disallowing access to the personalization item if the personalization item has expired.

41. (Original) The method of claim 24 further comprising:
determining whether the personalization item has been banned, and disallowing access to the personalization item if the personalization item has been banned.

42. (Original) The method of claim 24 further comprising creating an identifier for a personalization item based upon the application of an algorithm to at least a portion of data comprising the item.

43. (Original) The method of claim 42 further comprising determining if the personalization item is stored at the host system based upon the identifier; and, if the personalization item is stored at the host system, declining to redundantly store the personalization item at the host system.

44. (Original) The method of claim 43 further comprising determining whether the personalization item is an official item based upon the identifier; and displaying the personalization item if the personalization item is an official item.

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45. (Previously Presented) A computer readable storage device storing a computer program, the computer program comprising instructions for:

storing on a host system one or more personalization items associated with a chat application operator, the personalization items representing user preferences and being selected by the chat application operator in a non-chat, instant messaging context;

storing, in a memory accessible to a chat host system, a mapping of definitions of the personalization items in a chat context, which involves one-to-many communications, to definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context, which involves one-to-one communications, wherein at least one of the definitions of personalization items in the chat context differing from at least one of the corresponding definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context;

receiving a request from a chat participant system for personalization items associated with the chat application operator;

accessing the stored personalization items and the stored mapping at the host system;

identifying, based on the accessing, personalization items associated with the chat application operator; and

communicating the identified personalization items from the host system to the chat participant system for rendering in a chat application running on the chat participant system, the identified personalization item being mapped, based on the stored mapping, from the non-chat, instant messaging context to the chat context for rendering in the chat application.

46. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 45 in which instructions for receiving the request comprises instructions for receiving an identifier enabling identification of a personalization item associated with the chat application operator.

47. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 45 in which instructions for receiving the request comprises instructions for receiving an identity of the chat participant; and

instructions for accessing the personalization items comprises instructions for accessing the personalization items associated with the received identity.

48.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 45 in which instructions for storing the personalization items comprises instructions for storing a graphic.

49.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 45 in which instructions for storing the personalization items comprises instructions for storing a sound.

50.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 45 in which instructions for storing the personalization items comprises instructions for storing wallpaper capable of being rendered on a chat application user interface.

51.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 45 in which instructions for storing the personalization items comprises instructions for storing an animation sequence.

52.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 45 in which instructions for storing the personalization items comprises instructions for storing a video segment.

53.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 45 in which in which instructions for storing the personalization items comprises instructions for storing a personalization item configured to expire upon the occurrence of a predetermined event.

54.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 53 in which the predetermined event comprises passage of a predetermined length of time or the passage of a predetermined date.

55.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 53 in which the predetermined event comprises a predetermined number of uses.

56.   (Previously Presented) A computer readable storage device storing a computer program, the computer program comprising instructions for:

rendering, on a first chat participant system, a chat application user interface for a chat communications session, which involves one-to-many communications, involving at least an intended second chat participant and a first chat participant; and

rendering at the first chat participant system, a personalization item associated with the second chat participant prior to communication with the intended second chat participant system, the personalization item being selected by the second chat participant in a non-chat, instant messaging session, which involves one-to-one communications, and the rendering of the personalization item being based on a stored mapping of personalization item definitions from a non-chat, instant messaging context to a chat context, wherein at least one of the definitions of personalization items in the chat context differing from at least one of the corresponding definitions of the personalization items in the non-chat, instant messaging context.

57.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 56 in which instructions for rendering at the first chat participant system comprises instructions for rendering at the first chat participant system prior to communication of a chat message with the intended second chat participant system.

58.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 56 in which instructions for rendering at the first chat participant system comprises instructions for rendering at the first chat participant system before a communications session is established with the intended second chat participant system.

59.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 56 in which instructions for rendering at the first chat participant system comprises instructions for rendering at the first chat participant system before the first chat participant system sends a message to the intended second chat participant system.

60.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 56 in which instructions for rendering at the first chat participant system comprises instructions for rendering at the first chat participant

system before the first chat participant system receives a message from the intended second chat participant system.

61.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 56 further comprising instructions for:

obtaining an identifier associated with the personalization item;

obtaining the personalization item from a source other than a message used to obtain the identifier; and

rendering the personalization item at the first chat participant system.

62.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining the identifier comprises instructions for:

sending an identity of the intended second chat participant to a chat host system, the chat host system storing one or more identifiers associated with one or more personalization items for the intended second chat participant; and

receiving an identifier associated with the individual intended second chat participant in a message from the chat host system.

63.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining the identifier comprises instructions for locating the identifier at the intended second chat participant system.

64.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining the identifier comprises instructions for retrieving the identifier from a remote data store.

65.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining the personalization item comprises instructions for:

determining whether the personalization item associated with the received identifier is available at the first chat participant system;

retrieving the personalization item from the first chat participant system if the personalization item is available at the first chat participant system; and

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requesting the personalization item from a remote source and receiving the

personalization item from the remote source at the first chat participant system if the

personalization item is not available at the first chat participant system.

66.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining

the personalization item comprises instructions for obtaining a graphic.

67.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining

the personalization item comprises instructions for obtaining a sound.

68.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining

the personalization item comprises instructions for obtaining wallpaper capable of being

rendered on a chat application user interface.

69.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining

the personalization item comprises instructions for obtaining an animation sequence.

70.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining

the personalization item comprises instructions for obtaining a video segment.

71.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining

the personalization item comprises instructions for obtaining a customized binary object

provided by the intended second chat participant.

72.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 61 in which instructions for obtaining

the personalization item comprises instructions for obtaining a personalization item configured to

expire upon the occurrence of a predetermined event.

73.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 72 in which the predetermined event

comprises passage of a predetermined length of time or on passage of a predetermined date.

74.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 72 in which the predetermined event comprises a predetermined number of uses.

75.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 72 further comprising instructions for:
    determining whether the personalization item has expired, and
    disallowing display of the personalization item if the personalization item has expired.

76.   (Previously Presented) The device of claim 56 further comprising instructions for:
    determining whether the personalization item has been banned, and
    disallowing display of the personalization item if the personalization item has been banned.

77.   (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method for enabling perception of a personalization item in a chat communications session, the method comprising:
    storing a personalization item selected by a user in a non-chat, instant messaging context;
    mapping the stored personalization item from a non-chat, instant messaging context, which involves one-to-one communications, to a chat context, which involves one-to-many communications, the stored personalization item having a meaning in the non-chat, instant messaging context that is different from a meaning in the chat context;
    receiving, during a chat communications session involving the user, a request from a chat message recipient system for personalization items associated with the user; and
    sending the mapped personalization item to the chat message recipient system such that the mapped personalization item is rendered at the chat message recipient system when rendering a portion of a chat message.

78-89. (Canceled)

90.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 77, wherein storing a personalization item comprises storing at least one of an image, an icon, a sound, an animation, a video clip, and an emoticon.

91.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 77, wherein storing a personalization item comprises storing an icon associated with a buddy list used for instant messaging.

92.   (Canceled)

Evidence Appendix

None.

Related Proceedings Appendix

None.